CLAIMS

1. A method for controlling access to an electronic message comprising:
specifying an addressee for an electronic message;

5   determining a message context for the electronic message by specifying one
or more conditions selected from a group comprising a time condition, a
location of the addressee condition and at least one other condition
concerning the environment of the addressee, wherein the message context
defines conditions that must be satisfied before the addressee of the message

10   can access the message;
detecting the context of the addressee and comparing the context of the
addressee with the message context; and
enabling access by the addressee to the electronic message when the
detected context of the addressee corresponds to the message context.

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2. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the group of conditions is
augmentable with additional conditions concerning the environment of the
addressee.

20   3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the at least one other
condition concerning the environment of the addressee relates to the devices
that are proximal to the addressee.

4. A method as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the at least one other

25   condition concerning the environment of the addressee relates to the ambient
temperature at the addressee.

5. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the electronic
message additionally includes the context of the originator of the message

30   identifying plural conditions concerning the environment of the originator.

6. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the electronic message and the message context are stored at the terminal of the addressee before access to the electronic message is enabled.

5   7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the step of comparing the context of the addressee with the context of the message occurs at the terminal of the addressee, and the terminal enables the addressee to access the stored message when the context of the addressee corresponds to the context of the stored message.

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8. A method as claimed in claim 6 or 7, wherein the step of enabling access involves placing the stored electronic message in an Inbox of the terminal.

9. A method as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 8, wherein the electronic
15   message is self-addressed.

10. A method as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein access to the electronic message is enabled by sending the electronic message to the addressee.

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11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the step of detecting the context of the addressee occurs at a server remote from the terminal of the addressee using data received from the terminal of the addressee and wherein the step of comparing the context of the addressee with the message context, also
25   occurs at the remote server, which sends the electronic message to the terminal of the addressee when the detected context of the addressee corresponds to the message context.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the data received from the
30   terminal of the addressee includes data indicative of the environment of the addressee.

13. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the data indicative of the environment of the addressee identifies the devices that are proximal to the addressee.

5   14. A method as claimed in claim 12 or 13, wherein the data indicative of the environment of the addressee identifies the ambient temperature at the addressee.

15. A method as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the context of the
10   addressee is detected using inputs from a plurality of sensors for sensing the environment of the addressee.

16. A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a proximity sensor.

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17. A method as claimed in claim 15 or 16, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a temperature sensor.

18. A mobile terminal for composing electronic messages:
20   comprising a user interface that enables a user to set a context for an electronic message by specifying one or more conditions selected from a group comprising a time condition, a location of the addressee condition and at least one other condition concerning the environment of the addressee, wherein the message context defines conditions that must be satisfied before
25   the message can be accessed by the addressee of the message.

19. A method for controlling access to an electronic message comprising:
specifying an addressee for an electronic message;
determining a message context for the electronic message by specifying one
30   or more conditions selected from a group comprising a time condition, a location of the sender condition and at least one other condition concerning the environment of the sender, wherein the message context defines

conditions that must be satisfied before the addressee of the message can access the message;

detecting the context of the sender and comparing the context of the addressee with the message context; and

5 enabling access by the addressee to the electronic message when the detected context of the sender corresponds to the message context.

20. A method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the step of enabling access involves sending the electronic message.

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21. A mobile terminal for composing electronic messages:

comprising a user interface that enables a user to set a context for an electronic message by specifying one or more conditions selected from a group comprising a time condition, a location of the sender condition and at

15 least one other condition concerning the environment of the sender, wherein the message context defines conditions that must be satisfied before the message can be sent to the addressee of the message.

22. A method for controlling access to an electronic message comprising:

20 storing an electronic message, having a context, in an inaccessible state within a terminal wherein the context defines conditions that must be satisfied before the message can be accessed;

detecting a context of the terminal using one or more sensors;

comparing the detected terminal context with the message context;

25 enabling access to the electronic message when the detected terminal context corresponds to the message context.

23. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the message context comprises one or more conditions selected from the group comprising a time condition, a

30 location of the terminal condition and at least one other condition concerning the environment of the terminal,

24. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein access is enabled by placing the stored electronic message in an Inbox of the terminal.

25. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 24, wherein the plurality of sensors sense the environment of the terminal.

26. A method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a proximity sensor.

27. A method as claimed in claim 25 or 26, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a temperature sensor.

28. A method as claimed in claim 25, 26 or 27, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a location sensor.

29. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 28, wherein the message is self-addressed.

30. A mobile terminal for displaying the content of an electronic message, the terminal comprising:
a memory for storing an electronic message and a message context that specifies one or more conditions that must be satisfied before the message can be accessed;
detection means for detecting a terminal context that varies with the environment of the terminal and comparing the terminal context with the stored message context; and
enabling means for enabling access to the stored electronic message when the detected terminal context corresponds to the message context.

31. A mobile terminal as claimed in claim 30, wherein the one or more conditions of the message context are selected from a group comprising a

time condition, a location of the terminal condition and at least one other condition concerning the environment of the terminal.

32. A mobile terminal as claimed in claim 30 or 31, further comprising a user interface having an Inbox for incoming messages, wherein the enabling means places the stored electronic message in the Inbox.

33. A mobile terminal as claimed in claim 30, 31 or 32, further comprising a plurality of sensors for sensing the environment of the terminal and the detection means receives inputs from the plurality of sensors.

34. A mobile terminal as claimed in claim 33, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a proximity sensor.

35. A mobile terminal as claimed in claim 33 or 34, wherein the plurality of sensors includes a temperature sensor.